

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 157 340

EC 111 825

AUTHOR Dexter, Beverly L.
 TITLE Teach Unto Teachers As You Would Have Them Teach Unto Children.
 PUB DATE Jun 78
 NOTE 11p.; Paper presented at the World Congress on Future Special Education (First, Stirling, Scotland, June 25 - July 1, 1978)
 EDRS PRICE MF-\$0.83 HC-\$1.67 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Elementary Secondary Education; *Handicapped Children; Higher Education; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Mainstreaming; Post Secondary Education; Sensitivity Training; *Simulation; *Teachers; *Teacher Workshops
 IDENTIFIERS *Simovation

ABSTRACT

With the current emphasis on mainstreaming handicapped children into regular classrooms, there has been an increase in both the number and types of inservice education workshops requested by and for regular classroom teachers. Since few of these teachers have been affectively involved in the education of the handicapped, the primary focus of the initial workshops should be sensitivity toward the learning problems encountered by these students. Simovation activities (simulations focusing on feelings of frustration) help adults learn both effectively and affectively about learning problems through active participation in the learning of new skills under "handicapping" conditions. (Author/SBH)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

241 #16

ED157340

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

TEACH UNTO TEACHERS AS YOU
WOULD HAVE THEM TEACH UNTO CHILDREN

With the current emphasis on mainstreaming handicapped youngsters into the regular classroom, there has been an increase in both the number and the types of inservice education workshops requested by and for regular classroom teachers. Since few of these teachers have been affectively involved in the education of handicapped youngsters, the primary focus of the initial workshops should be sensitivity toward the learning problems encountered by these youngsters. Simovation activities help adults learn both effectively and affectively about learning problems through active participation in the learning of new skills under "handicapping" conditions.

Beverly L. Dexter, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor of Education
Lynchburg College
Lynchburg, Virginia 24501
804-845-9071, ext. 331

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS
MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

C.E.C.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND
USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

(C)

EC111825-

TEACH UNTO TEACHERS AS YOU WOULD HAVE
THEM TEACH UNTO CHILDREN

Teachers are learners too! As such, they deserve the same type of individualized instruction that is currently being advocated for children in all classroom settings. Too often university courses and inservice education workshops rely quite heavily on an authoritarian model where the professor lectures while the students take copious notes. This may prove to be expedient for the presenter, but is it the most effective (and affective) method for teaching teachers how to teach?

The realities of most college classroom experiences result in the fact that, in general:

1. The majority of college students expect to learn facts rather than practical information, and with this in mind they react accordingly by taking down every word the professor says rather than analyzing what is being said.
2. In general, college students expect to be uninvolved learners who should not question the "truths" presented by an authoritarian professor during a lecture.
3. Lectures dominate college classroom, and these usually consist of the information presented in the text rather than information students may feel they need to learn.

4. Individualized differences among learners are often discussed but rarely analyzed in relation to the students present in the college classroom.
5. College professors tell students to be humanistic in their classroom teaching, yet they rarely employ this theory in their own presentations.

Similar results often occur during inservice education workshops. With the current emphasis on mainstreaming, handicapped youngsters into the public school classroom, there has been an increase in the number and types of inservice education workshops requested by the regular classroom teachers. Since few of these teachers have been affectively involved in the education of handicapped youngsters, the primary focus of the initial workshops should be sensitivity toward the learning problems of these youngsters.

Lecturing about the difficulties encountered by these youngsters gives the regular teacher only a theoretical overview of the child and his learning problems. Films may show the child in action, but they still do not fully convey the total frustration felt by the child when he is confronted with a new learning skill which he is unable to master no matter how hard he tries. Role playing also does not fully convey these problems because it is difficult for a person to play the role of a handicapped youngster if he is basically unfamiliar with the type of handicap he is supposed to portray. Lengthy scenarios or descriptions of the situation may help familiarize the participant with the situation being portrayed, but they still do not show the teacher just how

such a child would react under the circumstances being presented or just how he would feel about the situation. Simulation games may be used to impart factual knowledge of the child and his learning problems, but they cannot possibly help the teacher understand the affective consequences of not being able to learn "simple" academic or motor skills which are easily accomplished by other children in the classroom.

Simovation activities eliminate many of the problems which develop when conventional methods are utilized in inservice or teacher education workshops. With simovation, the participants become actively involved in adult learning activities which put them in the shoes of the young or disabled learner. Active participation requires that the participants become involved in the activities being presented. These activities are designed to help the participant better understand the frustrations encountered by a learner who is having difficulty in mastering a new learning skill.

SIMOVATION DEFINED

In general simulation might be defined as a selective representation of reality. This representation contains elements of the real world which the designer feels are relevant to his purpose for developing the simulation activities to be used for a specific purpose by selected participants. The term simovation was coined to describe the innovative simulations developed to help classroom teachers better understand the frustrations encountered by handicapped youngsters in the school setting (Dexter, 1975).

In simovation, the experience of learning a new skill is real to the participants. However, the product, or the specific skill that is developed through the learning activity, may be of little actual use to the participant. What is important in simovation is the process through which the participant attempts to learn the new skill. For example, the learning activity may require the participant to learn how to read backwards, i.e., the words he is to read are all written backwards. This skill of being able to read backwards may never again be useful to the participant, but the process by which he learned this skill may be translated into appropriate learning theories. These may in turn be translated into appropriate teaching techniques. This process illustrates in a unique manner (1) starting the learning task where the learner is successful, (2) building on what the learner already knows, and (3) sequencing the learning task into small steps.

Simovation does not rely on role playing or gaming techniques for its activities. Rather, simovation attempts to put the adult learner in a situation where he is required to master a new learning skill which closely parallels a learning skill that is usually required of a handicapped youngster. The learning skills in simovation produce either cognitive or psychomotor skills in such a manner as to elicit involvement throughout the learning process.

Simovation, then, refers to an adult learning activity which:

1. Parallels the learning activity with which the child is faced, while representing a genuine learning task for the adult participant.
2. Generates affective responses in the participant which parallel the affective responses of the child in related learning situations.
3. Illustrates the importance of a learning principle or instructional strategy to the solution of the learning problems of the child who is attempting to learn a new skill.
4. Provides a practical illustration of the benefit to be derived from application of a particular learning principle or instructional strategy.
5. Supplements the application of specific learning principles or instructional strategies with a structured follow-up discussion.

A SAMPLE SIMOVATION ACTIVITY: "ANY WEDNESDAY"

The modified version of "Any Wednesday" presented here involved the printing of the word Wednesday on an index card held against the forehead. A more detailed explanation of this activity as well as adaptations of the activity may be found in Simovation: Experiential Inservice Teacher Education Workshops (Dexter, 1975).

Any Wednesday

Each participant is given a 3x5 index card and is told to print the word Wednesday on the card while it is held flush against

his forehead. The card may not be removed until the task is completed.

Once everyone has finished the task, each participant is asked to closely evaluate the final product (specific guidelines for evaluation may be given). Since the visual feedback frequently relied upon by adults is missing, and since placement of the card on the forehead actually reverses the normal printing procedure, numerous errors usually occur. Most commonly, there are reversals of the entire word (written from right to left rather than left to right) and/or reversals of individual letters. Other frequent errors include the overlapping of letters, the omission of letters (misspelling of the word), and exaggerated slanting (either up or down) of the word.

After evaluating the task results individually, the participants should be encouraged to share their evaluations with the group. Remedial procedures may then be discussed in either large or small groups. Logically, the first step in remediation would be to begin where the learner is successful. Thus, the severity of the "learning problem" determines where remediation should begin. In most cases this involved going back to an earlier stage in the developmental sequence, such as printing the word Wednesday on an index card in front of the learner as would be done under normal circumstances. Small sequential steps should then be developed for the learner, based on his learning style and learning needs. Sufficient practice at each step, especially when an appropriate reinforcement system is utilized, should result

in success with this task.

"Any Wednesday" may be used to demonstrate specific learning problems, task analysis, behavioral objectives and/or specific teaching techniques. These many uses provide the workshop leader or college professor with a simple and inexperienced teaching tool which allows all of the participants to experience both the learning and the teaching of a new skill in respect to "handicapped" learners.

Summary

Simovation provides both cognitive and affective learning experiences for the participant. Factual knowledge may be given in a variety of ways through the use of a simovation workshop, i.e., it may be used to describe the activity being presented, or it may be used as a part of the activity itself. Such knowledge, when imparted through the use of affective experiences, is felt to be more effective in helping teachers learn about handicapped youngsters. By having an actual handicapping condition imposed upon himself, the teacher learns what it feels like to be unable to complete assignments in the same manner as his classmates.

The participant is not required to pretend that the handicap is there, it is already imposed upon him. Therefore, he reacts as himself in the learning situation, with a handicapping condition imposed upon him which causes him to be unable to do the specified tasks assigned to him. By reacting as himself, the participant gains some insight into the reactions which might occur with a youngster who has a similar, but real, handicap which

prevents him from accomplishing specific learning tasks both inside and outside of the classroom situation.

Simovation also provides for the remediation of learning problems which are exemplified through the imposed handicapping condition. These remedial procedures should be developed to remediate the specific problems which exist in the situation being experienced by the participant. The development and transfer of specific teaching techniques with children may then be discussed and shared in either large or small group activities.

References

Dexter, Beverly L. Simovation: Experiential Teacher Education Workshops. Unpublished dissertation. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University, 1975.

Ward, T., and Levine, J. S. Yours--For A Better Workshop. East Lansing, Michigan: Michigan State University, 1971.

Zuckerman, D. W., and Horn, R. E. Guide to Simulation/Games for Education and Training. Lexington, Massachusetts: Information Resources, Inc., 1973.